

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for communicating with a ~~device-camera~~ connectable to a network, the method comprising:
enabling the ~~device-camera~~ to function as a unique instant messenger client for an instant messenger service; and
receiving messages from the ~~device-camera~~ over the network via the instant messenger service;
whereby the ~~device-camera~~, instead of a human user, acts as the instant messenger client, and becomes a buddy on the instant messenger service.
2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the enabling of the ~~device-camera~~ to function as an instant messenger client comprises:
registering a unique login with the instant messenger service for the ~~device-camera~~; and
programming the unique login into the ~~device-camera~~.
3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
pre-defining at least one pre-existing user of the instant messenger service with whom the ~~device-camera~~ is allowed to communicate.
4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
sending messages to the ~~device-camera~~ over the network over the instant messenger service.
5. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising:
pre-defining at least one message which can be sent to the ~~device-camera~~, and at least one action to be taken by the ~~device-camera~~ upon receiving the message.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the messages received from the ~~device-camera~~ over the network via the instant messenger service are initiated by the ~~device-camera~~ in response to a pre-specified criterion being satisfied.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~device-camera~~ is a webcam.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the webcam initiates sending a message over the network via the instant messenger service when the webcam detects motion.

9. (cancel)

10. (currently amended) A method for communicating with a ~~device-camera~~ using an instant messenger service, the method comprising:

enabling the ~~device-camera~~ to function as an instant messenger client for the instant messenger service;

connecting the ~~device-camera~~ to a network;

receiving messages from the ~~device-camera~~ over the network over the instant messenger service; and

sending messages to the ~~device-camera~~ over the network over the instant messenger service;

whereby the ~~device-camera~~, instead of a human user, acts as the instant messenger client, and becomes a buddy on the instant messenger service.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising:
pre-defining at least one message which can be sent to the ~~device-camera~~, and at least one action to be taken by the ~~device-camera~~ upon receiving the message.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the messages received from the ~~device-camera~~ over the network are initiated by the ~~device-camera~~ in response to a pre-specified criterion being satisfied.

13. (currently amended) A ~~device-camera~~ enabled to function as a unique instant messenger user over a network, the ~~device-camera~~ comprising:

an autonomous IM application module, which identifies the ~~device-camera~~ as a unique instant messenger user to an instant messenger service; and

a network interface coupled to the autonomous IM application module, to connect to the network to communicate with at least one other instant messenger user over the instant messenger service;

whereby the ~~device-camera~~, instead of a human user, acts as the instant messenger client, and becomes a buddy on the instant messenger service.

14. (currently amended) The ~~device-camera~~ of claim 13, wherein the autonomous imaging module initiates communication with the at least one other instant messenger user.

15. (currently amended) The ~~device-camera~~ of claim 13, wherein the ~~device-camera~~ is a camera/webcam.

16. (currently amended) The ~~device-camera~~ of claim 13, wherein the ~~device-camera~~ is a camera-compliant with a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP).

17. (currently amended) The ~~device-camera~~ of claim 13, wherein the ~~device-camera~~ is a camera-compliant with a SIP for Instant Messaging Presence Leveraging Extension protocol (SIMPLE).

18. (currently amended) The ~~device-camera~~ of claim 13, further comprising:
a predefined instructions module coupled to the autonomous IM application, to instruct the ~~device-camera~~ regarding interpreting instant messages received from the at least one other instant messenger user.